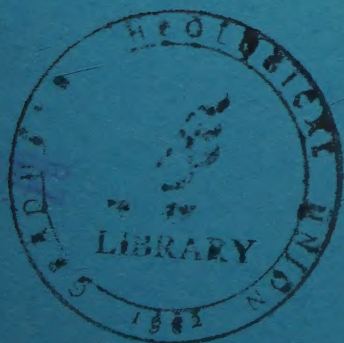




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THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY

THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY is a training monastery and retreat centre following the Sōtō Zen Buddhist tradition. The Priory is affiliated with Shasta Abbey whose Spiritual Director and Abbess is Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, O.B.C. Shasta Abbey, the Headquarters of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives of the Sōtō Zen Church, is located in Mt. Shasta, California. The monks of Throssel Hole Priory are disciples of Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett and follow her teaching.

ABBOT: Rev. Master Daishin Morgan, O.B.C.

TRUSTEES: Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, O.B.C.
Rev. Master Jishō Perry, O.B.C.
Rev. Master Daishin Morgan, O.B.C.

THE JOURNAL OF THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY is published as a service to all who are seriously interested in the practice of Buddhism. Through the pages of the Journal, members and friends of the Priory are able to share their understanding and experience of Zen training; we welcome and encourage letters from our readers. Opinions expressed in each article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Abbot, the Editor, or Throssel Hole Priory. The Journal is published quarterly: annual subscription is £4.75.

EDITOR: Rev. Teacher Chūshin Passmore, O.B.C.

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Throssel Hole Priory
Carrshield
HEXHAM
Northumberland
NE47 8AL

Phone: Whitfield (049 84) 204
(Between 9.30 am and 7.30 pm)

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NEWS

This Issue: The major part of this issue of the Journal is devoted to writings by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett on the history and practice of Sōtō Zen. We will also be publishing this material as a separate booklet for the information it contains will be very useful to those new to our practice. Meditation groups as well will find the booklet a helpful companion to our other introductory works, *Zen Meditation* and *Zen Training*.

The article 'Fears of extinction' by Rev. Master Daishin is a timely reminder of the purpose of Zen training: to become one with the Dharmakaya, the Body of Buddha. When this becomes the centre and focus of our lives, then our deepest fears can be looked at and accepted with compassion; without this centre, our fears go unrestrained and soon dominate our perception of the world.

Journal: Although we do our best to keep the rate as low as possible, we have had to raise the subscription to the Journal once again. The new annual rate is £4.75, (4 issues). (Foreign: Surface - £4.75; Air - to Europe, £5.50; other, £6.75). We hope our readers are finding the Journal useful in their training; we are always pleased to receive your letters and comments.

Ordinations: On 28 September 1983, Rev. Master Daishin ordained two postulants, Gillian Elizabeth Fisher and Elizabeth Christine Abbie. Gillian was given the name Hōun Monica (*She who stands fast within the Dharma Cloud*), and Elizabeth the name Hōun Myfanwy (*Daughter of the Water within the Dharma Cloud*). Eight monks are now training at the monastery and it is a joy to see the Sangha increasing in strength. We congratulate Revs. Monica and Myfanwy, and warmly welcome them into the monastic family.

Jūkai: The autumn Jūkai was attended by 14 people. The following trainees received Lay Ordination thus becoming

new Lay Buddhists and Ancestors of Shakyamuni ———
Dorothy French, Stephen Prosser, Maureen Lambert, Alison
Belbin, Jan Crookall-Greening, George Leahy, Gill Caplan,
Silvia Wells, Bill Ainslea, and Stefan Lang. Slowly the
Sangha grows, both monastic and lay, as each person re-
solves to train themselves and follow the Way of the
Buddha; to formally receive the Buddhist Precepts at
Jūkai is an important step in this growth and gives one
hope and encouragement to continue training in the days
ahead. We urge those who are thinking of coming to the
next Jūkai, April 16-23 1984, to apply as soon as they
can for this sesshin in particular is always booked up
many weeks in advance.

Guest Department: You should have all received the 1984
Guest Information brochure by now. Please note that next
year sesshins have been extended by one day, giving a
'full seven days' retreat, plus travel time. We have also
scheduled three Long Weekend retreats (Friday to Tuesday)
coinciding with traditional Buddhist festivals; if these
prove to be popular, we will schedule more the following
year. A priest from Throssel Hole Priory will be leading
two outside retreats in January 1984; in Buckingham,
January 13-15, and Cirencester, January 20-22. For more
details, please contact:

Hilaire & Lesley MacCarthy - Buckingham 813962
John Brown - Cirencester 66007

The Cirencester Meditation Group held a jumble sale in
December and, we are delighted to announce, raised £100
for the Building Fund. This is a great help and we are
most grateful to all those who helped organize this event;
it is only through the sincere efforts of all our members
and friends that the new Meditation Hall will get finish-
ed. The Cirencester Group tell us that they intend to
raise a £1000 for the Building Fund — they've certainly
made an excellent start.

Animal News: Josie the goose died unexpectedly on Octo-
ber 24. The next day she was ordained into the Sangha
as part of the traditional Buddhist funeral for animals,
and buried close to her favourite grazing ground. The

goose house is now home for two exotic African geese, bought earlier this year to keep Josie company.

Donations: We are very grateful for these recent donations: two first-aid boxes and infirmary supplies; a lawn mower, carpet, varnish, wood, and assorted furniture; shoes, clothing, flower pots and rhubarb plants; filing-card drawers and a local timetable; a food mixer, cleaning equipment, and kitchen knife; cakes, jam, mince-meat and chutney, fruit, chocolate, and other good food; silk flowers, material, and incense.

Begging Bowl: The Priory can still use an angle-poise lamp, padded envelopes (used are fine), file folders, a long-arm stapler (Rexel No. 36L or similar), work gloves, and stainless steel saucepans. For the present, we have plenty of cardboard mailing tubes and scrap paper, and a cornucopia of ring-binders. Please know that your help and support, both spiritual and material, is always appreciated.

Shasta Abbey: We are pleased to announce that in recent months Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett has confirmed the following monks as rōshis (the terms 'rōshi' and 'master' are identical): Revs. Kinzan Learman, Kōmei Larson, Andō Sacco, Kaizan Esformes, Kōten Benson, and Mokugen Kublicki; several monks also celebrated their tenth Ordination anniversaries this autumn. Strength of moral character, depth of spiritual experience and the ability to teach others are the basis of rank within the priesthood. We congratulate these monks for their steadfast training. In his lecture 'The Thirty-Seven Steps of the Path to Enlightenment,' Zen Master Dōgen says "Do not stop what should continue on and on."

* * *

HISTORY, DEVELOPMENT and PRACTICE of SŌTŌ ZEN

and

PERFECT FAITH

by

REV. RŌSHI JIYU-KENNETT, O.B.C.

[*Sōtō Zen* was written for the May-June 1983 issue of 'One Vehicle,' the annual magazine of the National University of Singapore Buddhist Society, and is reprinted with permission. After consultation with the author, it appears here in a slightly revised form and with additional notes and a larger bibliography.]

Perfect Faith was first published in the *Journal of Shasta Abbey*, May-June 1980. It was Rōshi Kennett's closing lecture to all trainees attending the Denkoe sesshin that spring. -ed.]



Rev. Rōshi Jiyu-Kennett, O.B.C.

History, Development and Practice of Sōtō Zen

Homage to the Buddha,
Homage to the Dharma,
Homage to the Sangha.

Zen, *Ch'an* in Chinese, *Jana* in Sanskrit, is a word which means meditation. All the Zen schools, including Sōtō (Ts'ao-tung in Chinese) trace their origins to Bodhidharma, the 28th Indian Patriarch, who, deploring the decline of true Buddhism in India, departed for China in approximately 470 A.D. After what was at that time an extremely dangerous sea voyage, he arrived in China somewhere to the south of Canton. From there he journeyed to Lo-Yang (Japanese Rakuyo), the capital of that area and, after some wandering, settled in Shao-lin temple (J. Shōrin-ji) where he spent nine years in meditation 'looking at a wall.'¹ In doing this, Bodhidharma was attempting to practise the same uninterrupted meditation practised by Shakyamuni Buddha just before his Enlightenment. Silence, stillness, and the avoidance of analytical discussion, resulting from many hours of practising *serene reflection* meditation (J. *Shikan-taza*), the keeping of the Buddhist Precepts and the putting of them into practice in one's daily life, both in service to others and in keeping faith with oneself, are to this day the main ingredients of the practice of Sōtō teachings.

Bodhidharma transmitted his teachings to Hui-ko (J. Eka) who in turn passed them on to Seng-ts'an (J. Sōsan). From Bodhidharma to Seng-ts'an the Transmission was direct from master to a single disciple. All practised the twelve *dhutas* (J. *Zuda-gyo*² or ascetic exercises), living in contented poverty and, as wandering monks, never spent more than one night in any one place. It is natural, therefore, given the above type of monastic activity, that the first three Patriarchs did not have much

influence on society in general. The fourth Patriarch, Tao-hsin (J. Dōshin), and the fifth Patriarch, Hung-jen (J. Kōnin), settled on Mount Shuang-feng (J. Sobo) in Huang-mei district (J. Kobai) in Chi-Chou (J. Kishu) which is the present-day Hupei province, for a period of sixty years, and surrounded themselves with more than five hundred disciples.

The fifth Patriarch, Hung-jen, had about seven hundred disciples, the most famous being Hui-neng (J. Enō), 638-713 A.D., whose story is told in the *Platform Scripture of the Sixth Patriarch* (q.v.). Born into a poverty-stricken family, Hui-neng entered the monastery of the fifth Patriarch where he spent his time pounding rice in the kitchen. He was eventually chosen by Hung-jen as his Dharma successor and sixth Patriarch; however, he was forced to spend fifteen years away from the monastery owing to the jealousy of the monks. After returning and taking up his abbacy, he had more than fifty disciples, two being Nan-yueh Huai-jang (J. Nangaku Ejō), 677-744 A.D., who is credited with founding the Lin-chi and Wei-yang (J. Rinzai and Igyō) schools of Zen with their accent on what was later to be called the 'kōan' (q.v.) system of teaching, and Ch'ing-yuan Hsing-ssu (J. Seigen Gyoshi), who died in 740 A.D., who continued the emphasis on the serene reflection method of meditation, and who is credited with founding the Ts'ao-tung, or present Sōtō, the Yun-men (J. Ummon), and Fa-yen (J. Hōgen) schools. His most prominent disciple was Shih-t'ou Hsi-chi'ien (J. Sekitō Kisen), 700-790 A.D.

About this time, the second-generation descendent of Nan-yueh Huai-jang, that is Po-chang Huai-hai (J. Hyakujō Ekai), 720-814 A.D., founded the first exclusively Zen monastery which had, at its heart and centre, a meditation hall. He established a new set of rules and regulations governing monastic life, these being a combination of the Indian Vinaya and the Chinese rules of etiquette.

One of the disciples of Shih-t'ou was Yueh-shan Wei-

yen (J. Yakusan Igen), 751-834 A.D., whose disciple was Yun-yen T'an-ch'eng (J. Ungan Donjō), 782-841 A.D. Yun-yen T'an-ch'eng transmitted Tung-shan Liang-chieh (J. Tōzan Roykai), 807-869 A.D. This last-named monk spent the latter part of his life on Mount Tung in Yun-chou (J. Inshu) where he taught several hundred students.

The Ts'ao-tung (J. Sōtō) school of Zen is thought to have derived its name from Mount Tung, or Tung-shan, and Tōzan Ryokai's prominent disciple, Ts'ao-shan Pen-chi (J. Sōzan Honjaku), 840-901 A.D. However, the line of Ts'ao-shan Pen-chi died out after several generations, and the present-day Sōtō school is descended from another of Tung-shan's disciples, Yun-chu Tao-ying (J. Ungo Dōyō), died 902 A.D., whose lineage was the most flourishing. There is also a theory that the word 'Sōtō' is a combination of the names Sōsan and Tōzan, both names appearing in the Sōtō line. I have, however, no historical proof of this.

In the beginning, the difference between the various schools was mainly that of different masters using different teaching methods. Chang Chen-chi, a member of the Rinzai school, says in *The Practice of Zen*:

From Bodhidharma to Hui-neng, and from Hui-neng all the way through Lin-chi and Tung-shan — a total period of approximately four hundred years — no established system of *hua tou* [The kōan exercise which became so popular in the Rinzai school. -J.K.] can be traced. The outstanding Zen Masters of this period were great 'artists'; they were very flexible and versatile in their teaching, and never confined themselves to any one system. It was mainly through the eloquent Master Tsung-kao [J. Daie Sōkō], 1089-1163 A.D., that the *hua tou* exercise became the most popular, if not the only, means by which Zen students have practised during the past eight centuries. But what happened before? How did those great figures Hui-neng, Ma-tsu, Huang-po, Lin-chi [J. Rinzai] himself, practise Zen? They must have used the 'serene reflection'

type of meditation still practised by the Ts'ao-tung school.³

The *hua tou*, or *kōan*, consists of meditation on one of the enlightenment stories of the old masters, and it is this type of meditation which is the main practice of the Lin-chi or Rinzai school at the present time. Although the above quotation speaks of the *kōan* system as being possibly the only method of practising Zen since Daie Sōkō, this is by no means true. The Sōtō school continued using its kaleidoscopic teaching methods, and, at the same time as Daie Sōkō, Hung-chih Cheng-chueh (J. Wanshi Shōkaku), 1091-1157 A.D., of the Sōtō school was the main advocate of *serene reflection* or *Moku-sho* Zen, characterised by silent meditation without the use of any artificial *kōan* as a theme. It is this practice which is characteristic of the Sōtō school at the present time. Zen Master Dōgen, who, in the 1200's brought Sōtō Zen from China to Japan, sharply criticised Daie Sōkō's teaching methods with regard to the *kōan*.

Zen Master Keidō Chisan Kōhō says that the Ts'ao-tung (J. Sōtō) school in China made little showing in its early years of development. However, its popularity had greatly increased by the middle of the Sung dynasty. Its main teachings were:

1. All beings are endowed with the Buddha Nature at birth and are, in consequence, essentially enlightened although they may not be conscious of it.
2. It is possible to enjoy fully the bliss of the Buddha Nature whilst practising *serene reflection* meditation (*Zazen*).
3. Practice, as defined earlier, and the certain knowledge which develops as a result of *Zazen*, must always complement each other.
4. We must sanctify the mundaneness of everyday life by carrying over the strict observances of religion and religious ceremonial into our daily lives.

The line of succession from Tōzan to Dōgen is as follows: Tōzan Ryokai, Ungo Dōyō, Dōan Dōhi, Dōan Kanshi, Ryozan Enkan, Daiyō Kyogen, Tōsu Gisei, Fuyō Dōkai, Tanka Shijyun, Chōrō Seiryō, Tendō Sōkaku, Setchō Chikan, Tendō Nyojō, Eihei Dōgen.

The main centre of the Sōtō school around the time of Tendō Sōkaku was Ming-chou (J. Mishu) in Chekiang province. Both Mount T'ien-t'ung and Mount Hsueh-tou (J. Tendō and Setchō) are in Ming-chou. Setchō Chikan, a simple and earnest man, travelled very little; but, in spite of this, history tells us that his voice was heard throughout the entire Chinese empire. Tendō Nyojō, 1163-1228 A.D., who taught Dōgen, lived in six different places before settling on Mount T'ien-t'ung. He was both firm and critical, teaching a rigorous type of Zen which exerted a great influence on later generations.

Zen Master Dōgen was born into a noble family, but unfortunately lost both his parents at an extremely young age. He became the ward of his uncle who hoped that he would find a position at the court of the Japanese emperors, but his mother, on her deathbed, had earnestly requested him to become a monk, and thereby avoid the constant feuding and warlike upheavals from which the Japanese nobility was suffering at the time. His uncle eventually agreed to his becoming a monk on Mount Hiei, and he was ordained by another of his uncles for this purpose. Mount Hiei was at this time the training centre of the Tendai school of Buddhism. Dōgen, however, was unable to satisfy his religious doubts with the teachings of Tendai and, after leaving Mount Hiei, went to Zen Master Eisai who was then teaching Rinzai Zen in Japan. He studied under Eisai's disciple Myozen but, still being unable to resolve his doubts, went, together with Myozen (who, it would seem, also had doubts concerning the Rinzai teachings⁴) to Sung China to search further for the Truth. Dōgen was then twenty-four years of age. He visited all the well-known monasteries and finally became the disciple of Ju-ching (J. Nyojō) on Mount T'ien-t'ung. After some two years

of extremely hard practice, Dōgen realised the liberation of body and mind and was named by Nyojō as his Dharma successor. He continued his training in China for two more years before returning to Japan, taking with him the ashes of Myozen, his former teacher, who had died whilst in China.

Dōgen's first attempt at being an abbot was not terribly successful. Feeling that his training was not yet deep enough, he settled in a small country temple for several years, and, after moving to several other temples, finally founded *Dai Hon Zan Eihei-ji* at Echizen in Fukui Prefecture which, together with *Dai Hon Zan Sōji-ji* in Yokohama, is one of the two head temples of the Sōtō school in Japan. There is a considerable similarity between Dōgen and the first two Japanese Patriarchs after him and the first three Patriarchs of China — Bodhidharma, Taisō Eka, and Kanchi Sōsan. Although he by no means lived only one night in any one place, and definitely had more than one disciple, Dōgen was, nevertheless, renowned for the purity of his life, and the strict practice of his religious training; rejecting worldly honours and wealth and keeping aloof from the powerful families of his day.⁵ It was not until Keizan Jōkin, the fourth Japanese Patriarch, that Sōtō Zen began to spread much in Japan, and between Dōgen and Keizan Jōkin two other Patriarchs are to be found, Koun Ejō and Tetsu Gikai. It was under Keizan Jōkin that Sōtō Zen was to burgeon into the largest of the Zen schools in Japan. Keizan was also responsible for much of the present ceremonial, although many of the private ceremonies used today are to be found in what are called the 'secret papers,' handed down from master to disciple at Transmission since the time of Bodhidharma, and originally written by him.

Dōgen's great work on the teaching and practice of Zen, the *Shōbōgenzō*,⁶ was written in the Japanese language rather than in the classical Chinese popular in his day for religious writings. This meant that the teachings were accessible to all and helped greatly in the spread of Zen throughout Japan. The profundity and

practicality of Dōgen's thought is obvious when reading this work. His main teachings were, first of all, non-sectarian: he did not want Zen to be divided into many schools, and was not happy that there should be such things as Rinzai, Sōtō, Hōgen, Ummon, and Igyō. He also made it clear that Zazen, being the true practice of the Buddha, was not something that was limited to the Zen schools alone. He selected what was best in Buddhism and tried hard, as did Bodhidharma, to return to the basic spirit of the Buddha himself. He taught clearly that Buddhism is one and undivided, and that the Buddha Nature was to be found equally in both men and women when true training was carried out. He insisted on the strict practice of basic religious training, the strict keeping of the Precepts, and the strict keeping of the rules of monastic life. He taught that the practice of themeless meditation (*sereine reflection* or *Zazen*) was both the gateway and the true expression of enlightenment. Meditation (*Zazen*) was not merely a means towards enlightenment: it was itself the practice of enlightenment, and all work done in this spirit, when it was within the Precepts and the rules of monastic life, was indeed enlightened action. He taught that the Buddha Nature was everywhere, that all beings were not only the Buddha Nature; they were also both within It and It was within them. He taught that the Buddha Nature *is* everything, and what we call humanity being only one part thereof; for both within humanity, and outside it, everything *is* the Buddha Nature — there being nothing whatsoever outside of the sea of Buddha Nature. He considered the direct Transmission of the essential Truth of Buddhism from master to disciple to be of the greatest importance and absolutely essential. During such a Transmission, the master and disciple become one in the great sea of Buddha Nature and know this for certain with everything within them. They know the Buddha Nature of themselves to be one with the universe. He taught that this Transmission must be handed on from one person to the next without interruption.

There is a dearth of information on the actual teaching methods of Sōtō masters, and it is because

of this that many more books exist on the teachings of other Zen schools at the present time in the West. 'The entering into the master's room to receive the secret teaching' has always been the way of Sōtō Zen. As Chang Chen-chi said in the above quotation, the original masters were great artists and did not keep to any one particular teaching method. In Sōtō Zen at the present time, masters can be found who will use kōans when such things are necessary to assist a particular student. I myself have met at least two masters who do this. Whilst this is not strictly in accordance with what I have spoken of above, it is perfectly normal and does occasionally take place. One teaching I have found to be very valuable is the importance that my own master placed upon understanding my own particular religious difficulties, and suiting his teaching to those difficulties so that I could overcome them. The teaching which is given in the master's room in Sōtō Zen is highly *kaleidoscopic* and the method of teaching is frequently totally different for each disciple.

Dōgen's main successor, as stated earlier, was Koun Ejō, who transmitted Tetsu Gikai. Gikai's disciple, Keizan Jōkin, 1268-1325 A.D., is frequently called the mother, whereas Dōgen is called the father, of Japanese Sōtō Zen. Dōgen was given the title *Kōsō* or *Highest Ancestor*, since he was the founder of the Sōtō school in Japan; Keizan Jōkin was given the title of *Taisō* which means *Greatest Ancestor*, because it was he who spread the teachings throughout Japan, thus causing the Sōtō school to flourish greatly. Sōtō Zen and Shin are the two largest of all the schools of Buddhism in that country. It was Keizan Jōkin who founded Dai Hon Zan Sōji-ji — thus Dōgen is always associated with Eihei-ji and Keizan with Sōji-ji. It is for this reason that there are two head temples, one of which, Eihei-ji, has always been thought of more in the context of meditation, and the other, Sōji-ji, in the context of practice. Obviously, meditation is of primary importance in both, but Sōji-ji's practice includes much scholastic, missionary, and social work together with its other monastic practices.

Keizan's most important written work is the *Denkōroku*⁸ which is the story of the Transmission of the Light, the finding of that which was found by the Buddha himself, Shakyamuni. It traces the Transmission, and describes the catalyst which enabled it to take place from the time of Shakyamuni in India to Bodhidharma, then through China to Tendō Nyojō, and on to Dōgen in Japan. The work of Keizan was continued by his two foremost disciples, Meihō Sotetsu and Gasan Shōseki, who had more than twenty disciples each, and it is from them that the present Sōtō masters of Japan are descended. I myself am descended through the line of Meihō Sotetsu. Gesshū Sōkō, a descendant of Meihō Sotetsu, transmitted a great disciple, Manzan Dōhaku, 1635-1714 A.D. It was Manzan who initiated the badly-needed reforms in the administration of the Sōtō school which corrected the abuses that had crept into the succession of offices in the temples. This great reformer transmitted Gekkan Gikō, and my own particular line is descended therefrom. My own master, Zen Master Keidō Chisan Kōhō, 1879-1967 A.D., unlike most of the Japanese priesthood, was himself unmarried, and I understood that this was true of his entire line. He was not happy about priests being married, although marriage (I was given to understand that marriage was forced on the priesthood by an Imperial edict) had crept into the system in the late 1800's, and has done much, in my own opinion, to seriously damage the strict training of the present Sōtō school in Japan.

Sōtō Zen is one of the few Mahayana schools in which there may still be seen some of the original Indian elements of Buddhism, the sharing of his sitting place by the Abbot with the Chief Junior monk being one example. It closely parallels the sharing by the Buddha of his own teacher's seat, and the Buddha himself sharing his seat with Makakashyo.

* * *

[The following two scriptures make clearly plain the teachings of Dōgen and the Sōtō school as well as its method of meditation. I quote the Shushōgi in full.]

SHUSHŌGI

What is Truly Meant by Training and Enlightenment

Introduction [The Reason for Training. -J.K.]

The most important question for all Buddhists is how to understand birth and death completely for, should you be able to find the Buddha within birth and death, they both vanish. All you have to do is realise that birth and death, as such, should not be avoided and they will cease to exist for, if you can understand that birth and death are Nirvana itself, there is not only no necessity to avoid them but also nothing to search for that is called Nirvana. The understanding of the above breaks the chains that bind one to birth and death, therefore this problem, which is the greatest in all Buddhism, must be completely understood.

It is very difficult to be born as a human being and equally difficult to find Buddhism however, because of the good karma we have accumulated, we have received the exceptional gift of a human body and are able to hear the Truths of Buddhism: we therefore have the greatest possibility of a full life within the limits of birth and death. It would be criminal to waste such an opportunity by leaving this weak life of ours exposed to changeableness [impermanence].

Changeableness [impermanence] offers no permanent succour. On what weeds by the roadside will the dew of our life fall? At this very minute this body is not my own. Life, which is controlled by time, never ceases even for an instant; youth vanishes for ever once it is gone. It is impossible to bring back the past when one suddenly comes face to face with changeableness, and it is impossible to look for assistance from kings, statesmen, relatives, servants, wife or children, let alone

wealth and treasure. The kingdom of death must be entered by oneself alone, with nothing for company but our own good and bad karma.

Avoid the company of those who are deluded and ignorant with regard to the truth of karmic consequence, the three states of existence, and good and evil. It is obvious that the law of cause and effect is not answerable to my personal will for, without fail, evil is vanquished and good prevails; if this were not so, Buddhism would never have appeared and Bodhidharma would never have come from the west.

There are three periods into which the karmic consequences of good and evil fall; one is the consequence experienced in this present world, the second is consequence experienced in the next world, and the third consequence experienced in the world after the next one; one must understand this very clearly before undertaking any training in the way of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, otherwise mistakes will be made by many and they will fall into heresy; in addition to this, their lives will become evil and their suffering will be prolonged.

None of us have more than one body during this lifetime, therefore it is indeed tragic to lead a life of evil as a result of heresy, for it is impossible to escape from karmic consequence if we do evil on the assumption that, by not recognising an act as evil, no bad karma can accrue to us.

Freedom is Gained by the Recognition of Our Past Evil Acts and Contrition therefor.

Because of their limitless compassion, the Buddhas and Patriarchs have flung wide the gates of compassion to both gods and men and, although karmic consequence for evil acts is inevitable at some time during the three periods, contrition makes it easier to bear bringing freedom and immaculacy. As this is so, let us be utterly contrite before the Buddhas.

Contrition before the Buddhas brings purification

and salvation, true conviction and earnest endeavour. Once aroused, true conviction changes all things in addition to ourselves, with benefits extending to everything including that which is animate and inanimate.

Here is the way in which to make an act of perfect contrition:

May all the Buddhas and Patriarchs, who have become enlightened; have compassion upon us, free us from the obstacle of suffering which we have inherited from our past existence, and lead us in such a way that we may share the merit that fills the universe; for they, in the past, were as we are now, and we will be as they in the future. All the evil committed by me is caused by beginningless greed, hate and delusion. All the evil is committed by my body, in my speech, and in my thoughts. I now confess everything wholeheartedly.

By this act of recognition and contrition we open the way for the Buddhas and Patriarchs to help us naturally. Bearing this in mind, we should sit up straight in the presence of the Buddha and repeat the above act of contrition, thereby cutting the roots of our evildoing.

Receiving the Precepts

After this act of recognition and contrition, we should make an act of deep respect to the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha for they deserve our offerings and respect in whatever life we may be drifting and wandering. The Buddhas and Patriarchs transmitted respect for the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha from India to China.

If they who are unfortunate and lacking in virtue are unable to hear of these Three Treasures, how is it possible for them to take refuge therein? One must not go for refuge to mountain spirits and ghosts, nor must one worship in places of heresy, for such things are contrary to the Truth. One must, instead, take refuge quickly in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha for therein is

to be found utter enlightenment as well as freedom from suffering.

A pure heart is necessary if one would take refuge in the Three Treasures. At any time, whether during the Buddha's lifetime or after His demise, we should repeat the following with bowed heads, making gasshō:

I take refuge in the Buddha,
I take refuge in the Dharma,
I take refuge in the Sangha.

We take refuge in the Buddha since He is our True Teacher; we take refuge in the Dharma since it is the medicine for all suffering; we take refuge in the Sangha since its members are wise and compassionate. If we would follow the Buddhist teachings, we must honour the Three Treasures; this foundation is absolutely essential before receiving the Precepts.

The merit of the Three Treasures bears fruit whenever a trainee and the Buddha are one: whoever experiences this communion will invariably take refuge in the Three Treasures, irrespective of whether he is a god, a demon, or an animal. As one goes from one stage of existence to another, the above-mentioned merit increases, leading eventually to the most perfect enlightenment. The Buddha Himself gave certification to the great merit of the Three Treasures because of their extreme value and unbelievable profundity. It is essential that all living things shall take refuge therein.

The Three Pure Collective Precepts must be accepted after the Three Treasures. These are:

Cease from evil,
Do only good,
Do good for others.

The following ten Precepts should be accepted next:

1. Do not kill.
2. Do not steal.
3. Do not covet.

4. Do not say that which is untrue.
5. Do not sell the wine of delusion.
6. Do not speak against others.
7. Do not be proud of yourself and devalue others.
8. Do not be mean in giving either Dharma or wealth.
9. Do not be angry.
10. Do not debase the Three Treasures.

All the Buddhas have received and carefully preserved the above Three Treasures, the Three Pure Collective Precepts, and the ten Precepts.

If you accept these Precepts wholeheartedly, the highest enlightenment will be yours and this is the undestroyable Buddhahood which was understood, and is understood, in the past, present and future. Is it possible that any truly wise person would refuse the opportunity to attain to such heights? The Buddha has clearly pointed out to all living things that whenever these Precepts are Truly accepted Buddhahood is reached, every person who accepts them becoming the True Child of Buddha.

Within these Precepts dwell the Buddhas, enfolding all things within their unparalleled wisdom: there is no distinction between subject and object for any who dwell herein. All things, earth, trees, wooden posts, bricks, stones, become Buddhas once this refuge is taken. From these Precepts come forth such a wind and fire that all are driven into enlightenment when the flames are fanned by the Buddha's influence. This is the merit of non-action and non-seeking; the awakening to True Wisdom.

Awakening to the Mind of the Bodhisattva.

When one awakens to True Wisdom it means that one is willing to save all living things before one has actually saved oneself. Whether a being is a layman, priest, god or man, enjoying pleasure or suffering pain, he should awaken this desire as quickly as possible.

However humble a person may appear to be, if this

desire has been awakened, he is already the teacher of all mankind: a little girl of seven even may be the teacher of the four classes of Buddhists and the mother of True Compassion to all living things. One of the greatest teachings of Buddhism is its insistence upon complete equality of the sexes.

However much one may drift in the six worlds and the four existences, even they become a means for realising the desire for Buddhahood once it has been awakened. However much time we may have wasted up to now there is still time to awaken this desire. Although our own merit for Buddhahood may be full ripe, it is our bounden duty to use all this merit for the purpose of enlightening every living thing: at all times there have been those who put their own Buddhahood second to the necessity of working for the good of all other living things.

The Four Wisdoms, charity, tenderness, benevolence, and sympathy, are the means we have of helping others, and represent the Bodhisattva's aspirations. Charity is the opposite of covetousness; we make offerings although we ourselves get nothing whatsoever. There is no need to be concerned about how small the gift may be so long as it brings true results for, even if it is only a single phrase or verse of teaching, it may be the seed to bring forth good fruit now and hereafter.

Similarly, the offering of only one coin or a blade of grass can cause the arising of good, for the teaching itself is the True Treasure and the True Treasure is the very teaching. We must never desire any reward and we must always share everything we have with others. It is an act of charity to build a ferry or a bridge and all forms of industry are charity if they benefit others.

To behold all beings with the eye of compassion, and to speak kindly to them, is the meaning of tenderness. If one would understand tenderness, one must speak to others whilst thinking that one loves all living things as if they were one's own children. By praising those who exhibit virtue and feeling sorry for those who do

not, our enemies become our friends and they who are our friends have their friendship strengthened: this is all through the power of tenderness. Whenever one speaks kindly to another his face brightens and his heart is warmed; if a kind word be spoken in his absence the impression will be a deep one. Tenderness can have a revolutionary impact upon the mind of man.

If one creates wise ways of helping beings, whether they be in high places or lowly stations, one exhibits benevolence. No reward was sought by those who rescued the helpless tortoise and the sick sparrow, these acts being utterly benevolent. The stupid believe they will lose something if they give help to others, but this is completely untrue for benevolence helps everyone, including oneself, being a law of the universe.

If one can identify oneself with that which is not oneself one can understand the true meaning of sympathy. Take, for example, the fact that the Buddha appeared in the human world in the form of a human being; sympathy does not distinguish between oneself and others. There are times when the self is infinite and times when this is true of others: sympathy is as the sea in that it never refuses water from whatsoever source it may come; all waters may gather and form only one sea.

Oh you seekers of enlightenment, meditate deeply upon these teachings and do not make light of them. Give respect and reverence to their merit which brings blessings to all living things; help all beings cross over to the other shore.

Putting the Teachings into Practice and Showing Gratitude.

The Buddha Nature should be thus simply awakened in all living things within this world, for their desire to be born herein has been fulfilled. As this is so, why should they not be grateful to Shakyamuni Buddha?

If the Truth had not spread throughout the entire world it would have been impossible for us to have found

it, even should we have been willing to give our very lives for it: we should think deeply upon this. How fortunate have we been to be born now when it is possible to see the Truth. Remember the Buddha's words, "When you meet a Zen Master who teaches the Truth do not consider his caste, his appearance, shortcomings or behaviour. Bow before him out of respect for his great wisdom and do nothing whatsoever to worry him."

Because of consideration for others on the part of the Buddhas and Patriarchs, we are enabled to see the Buddha even now and hear His teachings. Had the Buddhas and Patriarchs not truly Transmitted the Truth it could never have been heard at this particular time: even only so much as a short phrase or section of the teaching should be deeply appreciated. What alternative have we but to be utterly grateful for the great compassion exhibited in this highest of all teachings which is the very eye and treasury of the Truth? The sick sparrow never forgot the kindness shown to it and rewarded it with the ring belonging to the three great ministers, and the unfortunate tortoise remembered too, showing its gratitude with the seal of Yōfu. If even animals can show gratitude, surely man can do the same?

You need no further teachings than the above in order to show gratitude, and you must show it truly, in the only real way, in your daily life; our daily life should be spent constantly in selfless activity with no waste of time whatsoever.

Time flies quicker than an arrow and life passes with greater transience than dew. However skilful you may be, how can you ever recall a single day of the past? Should you live for a hundred years just wasting your time every day and month will be filled with sorrow; should you drift as the slave of your senses for a hundred years and yet live truly for only so much as a single day you will, in that one day, not only live a hundred years of life but also save a hundred years of your future life. The life of this one day, today, is absolutely vital life; your body is deeply significant.

Both your life and your body deserve love and respect for it is by their agency that Truth is practised and the Buddha's power exhibited: the seed of all Buddhist activity and of all Buddhahood is the true practice of Preceptual Truth.

All the Buddhas are within the one Buddha Shakyamuni and all the Buddhas of past, present and future become Shakyamuni Buddha when they reach Buddhahood. This Buddha Nature is itself the Buddha and, should you awaken to a complete understanding thereof, your gratitude will know no bounds.

* * *

[The physical and mental attitude required for serene reflection meditation is described in detail in the following work which is recited daily in Zen temples.]

* * *

FUKANZAZENGI (Zazen Rules)

Why are training and enlightenment differentiated since the Truth is universal? Why study the means of attaining it since the supreme teaching is free? Since Truth is seen to be clearly apart from that which is unclean, why cling to a means of cleansing it? Since Truth is not separate from training, training is unnecessary — however, the separation would be as that between heaven and earth if even the slightest gap exists for, when the opposites arise, the Buddha Mind is lost. However much you may be proud of your understanding, however much you may be enlightened, whatever your attainment of wisdom and supernatural power, your finding of the way to mind illumination, your power to touch heaven and to enter into enlightenment, when the opposites arise you have almost lost the way to salvation. Although the Buddha had great wisdom at birth, He sat in training for six years; although Bodhidharma Trans-

mitted the Buddha Mind, we still hear the echoes of his nine years facing a wall. The Ancestors were very diligent and there is no reason why we people of the present day cannot understand. All you have to do is cease from erudition, withdraw within and reflect upon yourself. Should you be able to cast off body and mind naturally, the Buddha Mind will immediately manifest itself; if you want to find it quickly, you must start at once.

You should meditate in a quiet room, eat and drink moderately, cut all ties, give up everything, think of neither good nor evil, consider neither right nor wrong. Control mind function, will, consciousness, memory, perception and understanding; you must not strive thus to become Buddha. Cling to neither sitting nor lying down. Place a round cushion on top of a thick square one on your seat. Some people meditate in the full-lotus position and others in the half-lotus one. In the full-lotus position your right foot is placed upon your left thigh and your left foot is placed upon your right thigh; in the half-lotus position the left foot is placed upon the right thigh and nothing more; do not wear tight clothing. Rest the right hand on the left foot and the left hand in the palm of the right hand with the thumbs touching lightly; sit upright, leaning neither to left nor right, backwards nor forwards. The ears must be in line with the shoulders and the nose in line with the navel; the tongue must be held lightly against the back of the top teeth with the lips and teeth closed. Keep the eyes open, breathe in quickly, settle the body comfortably and breathe out sharply. Sway the body left and right then sit steadily with the legs crossed, neither trying to think nor trying not to think; just sitting, with no deliberate thought, is the important aspect of Zazen.

This type of Zazen is not something that is done in stages of meditation; it is simply the lawful gateway to carefree peace. To train and enlighten ourselves is to become thoroughly wise; the kōan appears *naturally* in daily life. If you become thus utterly free you will be as the water wherein the dragon dwells or as the moun-

tain whereon the tiger roams. Understand clearly that the Truth appears naturally and then your mind will be free from doubts and vacillation. When you wish to arise from Zazen, sway the body gently from side to side and arise quietly; the body must make no violent movement; I myself have seen that the ability to die whilst sitting and standing, which transcends both peasant and sage, is obtained through the power of Zazen. It is no more possible to understand natural activity with the judgemental mind than it is possible to understand the signs of enlightenment; nor is it possible to understand training and enlightenment by supernatural means; such understanding is outside the realm of speech and vision, such Truth is beyond personal opinions. Do not discuss the wise and the ignorant, there is only one thing — to train hard for this is true enlightenment; training and enlightenment are naturally undefiled; to live by Zen is the same as to live an ordinary daily life. The Buddha Seal has been preserved by both the Buddhas in the present world and by those in the world of the Indian and Chinese Ancestors, they are thus always spreading true Zen — *all* activity is permeated with pure Zazen — the means of training are thousandfold but pure Zazen must be done. It is futile to travel to other dusty countries thus forsaking your own seat; if your first step is false, you will immediately stumble. Already you are in possession of the vital attributes of a human being — do not waste time with this and that — *you* can possess the authority of Buddha. Of what use is it to merely enjoy this fleeting world? This body is as transient as dew on the grass, life passes as swiftly as a flash of lightning, quickly the body passes away, in a moment life is gone. O sincere trainees, do not doubt the true dragon, do not spend so much time in rubbing only a part of the elephant; look *inwards* and advance directly along the road that leads to the Mind, respect those who have reached the goal of goallessness, become one with the wisdom of the Buddhas, *Transmit* the wisdom of the Ancestors. If you do these things for some time you will become as herein described and then the treasure house will open naturally and you will enjoy it fully.

At the present time Sōtō Zen has come to Western countries and flourishes both in the training temple here in Mount Shasta, and in organisations in several other cities throughout the Americas, Europe, and Australia. These are run by numerous other Zen masters belonging to other lines than my own.

The only difference between what I learned in Japan and what the trainees with me are practising here that is of any significance is that it would seem impossible to practise begging in America. The English language is, of course, used for all teaching purposes, and the scriptures have been translated into English. Married life is not permitted if people wish to be ordained as monks. From my own experience, purity of life in all its forms is absolutely essential for any real success in the study of Sōtō Zen.

Homage to the Buddha,
Homage to the Dharma,
Homage to the Sangha.

* * *

Notes

(Full publication details in bibliography)

1. See *Fukanzazengi* [Zazen Rules] on p. 20 for the method of meditation used during these nine years.
2. *Zuda-gyo* or *jūni-zuda*: dvādasā dhūtagunāh, the twelvefold practice of a Hinayana monk which aims at eliminating all forms of attachment:

1. *Aranyaka* (dwelling in the forest). 11. *Yāthā-samstarika* (taking any seat which may be offered). 111. *Paīndapātika* (living on alms). 1V. *Aikāsan-ika* (observing the rule of using only one seat for meditation and eating). V. *Nāmatika* (wearing coarse garments). VI. *Khalu-pascādbhaktika* (not eating after the time when one should cease eating).

Vll. *Pāmsukūlika* (wearing clothes made of rags taken from a dust heap). Vlll. *Traicīvarika* (having only three robes). lX. *Smāsānika* (living in or near a cemetery). X. *Vrksamūlika* (living under a tree). Xl. *Abhyavakāsika* (living in the open air), and Xll. *Naisadika* (using the sitting posture for sleeping. — *Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary* by Daitō Shuppansha.

3. *The Practice of Zen*, p. 56
4. *Dōgen's Formative Years in China*, pp. 32-33.
5. I by no means wish to imply that those following both the third Japanese and the third Chinese Patriarchs were in any way less pure or strict than Bodhidharma; as I understand it, it is simply that Zen began to be much more widely spread after these Patriarchs, and a new lifestyle was necessary.
6. *Zen is Eternal Life* includes several chapters from the *Shōbōgenzō*: see also bibliography.
7. See Dōgen's 'Genjo-kōan' [The Problem of Everyday Life] *Zen is Eternal Life*, pp. 171-75, as a first-class example.
8. *Zen is Eternal Life*, pp. 199-264.

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- N.B. Rōshi Kennett is currently working on a new and

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* * *

Perfect Faith

(During her earlier talks, Rōshi Kennett spoke of Keizan Zenji's *Denkōroku* as "that by which the perfection of faith may be clearly understood....It is a series of road maps with sign posts. You have to have perfect faith for a fraction of a second and then the road map will appear." She pointed out how perfection of faith requires going beyond the opposites: "I am saddened by the number of times I am asked 'How do I get beyond the doubt? How do I get beyond the fear? The day that I shall really rejoice will be when people ask 'How do I get beyond the certainty and freedom?' Doubt and certainty are just as much opposites as are fear and freedom; and certainty and freedom, although they sound so desirable, are mere opposites....the *Denkōroku* tells us not merely how to live beyond the opposites, but how to find the perfection of faith, how to see all things as absolutely possessing Buddha Nature — man or animal, animate or inanimate." -ed.)

Homage to the Buddha,
Homage to the Dharma,
Homage to the Sangha.

During this Denkoe sesshin, the one very important point I have been endeavouring to make clear is the difference between perfect faith and absolute faith. Far too many people feel that, if you come to a monastery, you have to give up your will and blindly follow everything you are told. Perfect faith, however, does not require this. What it does require is that you accept everything with a positive attitude of mind. Absolute faith, which is a requirement of many religions, differs from perfect faith in that 'absolute' implies a hardness, with no means whatsoever of allowing in softness or change. It is absolute — there can be no differences or movement within it. Absolute faith is rigid and results in bigotry, fear, and frequently in the giving up of the will. In perfect faith there is a give-and-take on the side of both master and disciple, a willingness of the master to ask the help of the disciple and a willingness of the disciple to ask the help of the master, but all with a positive attitude of mind. If it becomes hard or heavy, it is not perfect faith.

Perfect faith is full of lightness and love. It is softer than a cloud yet harder than a diamond. It is all of these things and changes constantly. The law of anicca applies, as well as the law of no-self and, since there is no-self, there can only be a mutual sharing. In absolute faith the residual hardness is as *some*-thing rather than *no*-thing. It is extraordinarily difficult to explain how the master-disciple relationship works but, as a rule of thumb, it must be understood that if the master requires the disciple to give up his will to him, then he is no master and there is no relationship. But if the master tells the disciple that he must have perfect faith in that which is greater than both master and disciple, which is indeed the True Master, the disciple is in a totally different situation. When you leave the Abbey you must be very careful of any person who wants to give up his will to you (there are many who believe that this is the way of Buddhism and, in particular, the way of Zen, but this is not the case). The master neither collects souls nor takes away wills. If he does, beware of him. You must be able to keep your

individual will, to surrender only to the Greater Master if it be required of you. (I have yet to see it *required* of anyone although I *have* seen it freely given in perfect faith). There is *absolute free will* in Sōtō Zen. Please be very careful of this point.

Perfect faith is always changing and always the same, always interesting and always joyful, never seeing an opposite because it has indeed gone beyond opposites. Opposites can only exist when we have not yet transcended them. When they have been transcended, every day is a good day, as Keizan says, and all work is the work of the Buddha. Then there is no such thing as good and bad, like and dislike; there is only the positivity that lies *beyond* these opposites. Remember also it is a positivity that does not require positivity, a Truth that does not insist upon Truth. It is a love that does not insist on being loved but loves for the sake of loving. This is why we should be very careful of not judging ourselves. Since the Lord of the House does not judge us, why are we so stupid as to live within the opposites and judge ourselves? We need to have a faith that does not insist upon faith — *this* is what the master must teach. That the disciples do not yet, and perhaps never will, believe what the master says is not the master's problem. He has shown what he knows to be the Truth — a Truth that does not insist upon Truth. The master's rightful occupation is holding out his arm to the disciple who is trying to swim in the river so that the disciple does not sink. As soon as the disciple can swim, it is the master's duty to retract his arm, allowing the disciple to swim on his own. If the disciple bumps into a rock and asks for some salve for his head, it is the master's duty to give it to him, but *not* to get in there and make sure that the disciple bumps his head into the rock so as to be able to give the salve! Please be clear on what I am saying here. Once the disciple has truly entered the stream, there is no more master and disciple in the old sense and yet the master and disciple will always exist in the old sense. There is a giving and receiving, a loving and being loved. When we enter into this *real*

love, which is known as That Which Is, the Lord of the House, the Cosmic Buddha, then we know that real love requires nothing, wants nothing, and knows nothing. It just IS and gives constantly. Pure faith is the same thing — existing constantly and giving constantly. It IS and that is all. It does not say "Give me your will, give me your faith, give me proof of your faith." These things are as foreign in perfect faith as are dross and gold. Be very careful. So many people want you to take their wills, saying that in Zen you must surrender to the master, but they do not know who the Real Master is. They worry and cry "How do I find a master? How do I recognise someone to whom I can surrender?" As the Patriarch Kabimora told Nagyaarajyuna "Do not worry about whether I am a true saint or not. *Just have faith.*"¹ Do not play tricks with or rob yourselves. Just have faith and learn together with all living things. The master that is a True Master does not insist upon his mastery, any more than the Truth that is Real Truth insists upon itself....

Homage to the Buddha,
Homage to the Dharma,
Homage to the Sangha.

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Notes

1. *Zen is Eternal Life*, p. 248.

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Fears of Extinction

Rev. Master Daishin Morgan, O.B.C.

The arrival of cruise missiles and the increase in rhetoric on the issue of nuclear weapons, together with graphic images of nuclear destruction on television, appear to have brought to the surface many people's fear and despair about the prospects for human life. Images of destruction haunt the recesses of our minds; and although we may not live in a state of constant fear, these images add to the level of background fear that affects us all.

Fear is nothing new; from our earliest childhood we evolve ways of dealing with it. Unfortunately, fear is used on children to instill politeness, social values, and the mysterious quality called 'character.' Fear has become so pervasive in our lives that our sensitivity to it has become dulled. We act out of fear without knowing that we do so, and this is dangerous for our survival, spiritually and physically.

From early childhood we learn techniques of avoiding or attempting to avoid what we fear. Children throw a fit, feign sickness, or use other ploys to avoid school, especially if they feel out of place in the system. Later in life, we learn more subtle methods of avoidance, but when confronted with something as horrible as images of nuclear war our defences are partially broken down and we are forced to recognise some of our fears. If we are not accustomed to facing our inner fears, the result is often despair. My purpose is not to argue the morality of nuclear weapons, or the methods of the media in presenting the issue. Instead, I would like to point out how this fear can be used as a catalyst within one's religious training.

For many people, there is an event in their lives that causes them to question the purpose and meaning of life. Often this is the death of a loved one or the near death of themselves. Sometimes it is the inescapable fact of suffering, as it was in Shakyamuni's case. For him, the sight of suffering mankind broke through his cocoon and he could no longer ignore his innermost yearning to find an answer. Each of us has a catalyst of one kind or another that prods us into facing the unpleasant side of ourselves, and through acceptance, love and meditation, come to know our True Nature.

If recent world events have aroused fear and despair, then these can be used as a catalyst to drive one further into the heart of meditation to find an answer. The first thing to do, as with all aspects of the kōan of daily life, is to learn to sit still within it. Avoidance doesn't work; the experience of the past clearly shows that even if we are successful in avoiding one thing that frightens us, it will not be long before another takes its place. It is clearly necessary to deal with fear itself before we can find real peace. To sit still with fear means not avoiding it and not seeking it out. Some people's reaction to fear is to find something dangerous to do in order to prove their mastery of fear. The trouble is there is no end to this as there is always a higher mountain to climb and another challenge to face. This is to be enslaved by fear. It is much harder to sit still: this is the pure expression of acceptance. You do not try to hide from it, go looking for it or feed it with a lurid imagination. The fear arise of itself when we confront ourselves in meditation because it is part of us.

Next, it is necessary to be willing to be frightened. This means to refrain from judging ourselves as weak, cowardly, guilty or inadequate, but instead to be willing to sit there and be frightened without trying to make the fear go away. By doing this, we are already expressing fearlessness and breaking the chains that bind us to the fear. If we continue to do this, we find something within that is unmoved by fear, something that

remains at peace no matter what terrible things take place. To live from this deep stillness, which we call the Buddha Nature, is the purpose of meditating. To do so, it is necessary to let the self drop away, along with all its fears, greeds and hates. If we follow the fear further, having touched perhaps fleetingly that inner peace, then we find our most deeply-rooted fears beginning to surface. This only happens once we have learned to be still within those fears we were aware of to begin with. By handling these deeper fears in exactly the same manner, we come closer all the time to the Buddha Nature. The main obstacle to our progress is our sense of 'self.' If we are willing for the self to drop away (perhaps the most fearful thing of all) then we can know the peace and freedom of the Life of Buddha. It is the perception of the Buddha Nature, the knowledge of its immensity, indestructibility, and infinite love which gives us the faith and strength to confront our deepest fears, and let go of self. We all tremble at the prospect of this, but the power of the Way-seeking Mind when supported by our willingness is stronger than our fear.

This willingness, which expresses itself in the desire to change anything within ourselves that might obstruct the free flow of the Buddha Nature, is what will dismantle the prison. Once a crack appears in the prison wall and daylight comes in, we know for certain that the sun exists. As this certainty matures, the fear of life and death drop away. You know that nothing can harm the Buddha within. Although the world were to end, the Life of Buddha would not be impeded even for a moment.

Faith is greatly enhanced by this discovery and you learn to rely solely upon the Buddha Nature. All things including 'oneself' are transient and subject to suffering, but the Essence of all life which you have now touched is all that is real. This Essence, the Buddha Nature, is revealed in all things and you come to the realisation that nothing is outside of It, not even the nuclear bombs which perhaps caused you to look for It in the first place.

Your perception of the world is now very different.

The images of nuclear destruction, the news of more weapons being assembled, serve to point you deeper into enlightenment as more vestiges of fear are removed, and you rely more and more upon the Buddha Nature. Thus the bomb becomes a Buddha that teaches the Dharma and the fearful images become the wrathful aspects of compassion showing you the Way.

When a person can look without fear, he is able to leave emotionalism behind and act with clarity. We cannot sit around and wait for clarity to appear. Our responsibilities are pressing and so we must take decisions and act now, doing the best we can. The Buddhist Precepts are our guide and constant reference point. If we apply the Precepts with sincerity to each specific situation, then we will not go far wrong. Any mistakes will serve to demonstrate how the process can be fine-tuned. This fine-tuning can only be done if there is movement. We must trust our Buddha Nature sufficiently to act upon It although we may have yet to see It clearly. This reliance on the Buddha Nature is an act of faith; the more we act on faith, the clearer our duty becomes.

* * *

BOOKS & BUDDHIST SUPPLIES

NEW ITEMS

Recipes from Shasta Abbey (and others)

This collection of recipes by members and friends of Shasta Abbey is not new, but we forgot to include it in our latest brochure. It includes Shasta Abbey's secret granola recipe, zucchini (courgette) torte, chocolate cheese cake, and many other delicious recipes. 32pp., £2.20.

COMING SOON

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A short, comprehensive text on the basic teachings of Buddhism. Ven. Nārada Maha Thera followed the Theravada tradition, but this book is equally useful to all Buddhists. It is printed in Malaysia and often hard to find in bookshops. We hope to have it in two to three months time; enquire then for details and price.

DISCONTINUED

Buddhist Scriptures and Ceremonies. Cassette tape: a new version is expected soon.

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